











## **LAST WORD**

We're here to bring God's Kingdom to our communities, and that often involves doing things differently. Jesus acknowledges this when He says, 'Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on My account.'

(Matthew 5:11) Mary embraced this truth, showing selfless generosity with how people perceived her as she loved on Jesus. Her brave example has inspired believers for thousands of years. Being generous with how people perceive us may not be instantly recognisable as a kind of generosity, but it's a powerful way of expressing our faith in a loving, generous God. It will take courage, determination, and resilience, and we may be treated unfairly. Thankfully, however, our love for God can overwhelm any reluctance to be criticised or misperceived, enabling our love to be meaningfully experienced by those around us.

## **DEEPER WALK**

*Select at least one activity below to complete before watching the next session.*

**Read:** Meditate on Psalm 37:7 and consider how it might help you to be generous with how others perceive you: 'Be still in the presence of the Lord and wait patiently for Him to act. Don't worry about evil people who prosper or fret about their wicked schemes.' What makes you restless? *Be still.* Are you hoping God will defend your efforts and reputation? *Wait patiently for Him to act.* Whose antagonism is rubbing you up the wrong way? *Don't worry and fret.*

**Write:** Jot down the names of all the people whose opinions mean a lot to you. Put an asterisk next to a name if you know that person's opinion is likely to stop you from showing bold compassion in your circle of influence. What would it take to remove the asterisk? Write down any ideas that come to mind.

**Pray:** Galatians 1:10 reads, 'Obviously, I'm not trying to win the approval of people, but of God. If pleasing people were my goal, I would not be Christ's servant.' Use this verse as a prayer prompt, praying it back to God: *Help me not to want to win the approval of people, but of You, God. I don't want pleasing people to be my goal because I'm serving You, Jesus, not them.*

